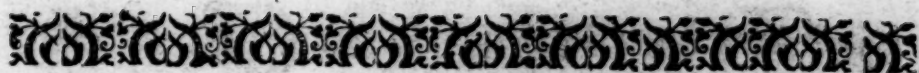


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THE
CRISIS.



THE NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

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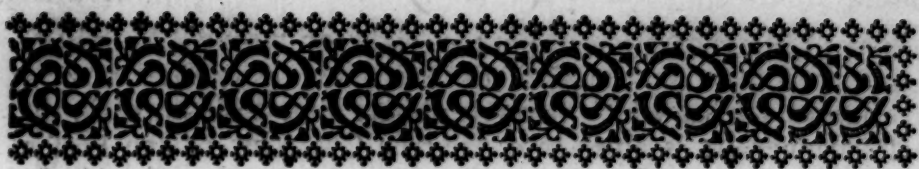
THE
C R I S I S:
OR, SEASONABLE
A D V I C E
TO THE

Freeholders of *Great-Britain*.

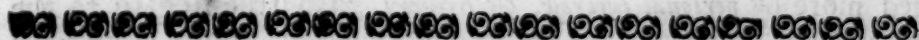
*Pulchrum est benefacere Reipublicæ, etiam
benedicere haud absurdum est.* —
Sallust.

L O N D O N:

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THE
CRISIS:
OR, SEASONABLE
ADVICE
TO THE
Freeholders of *Great-Britain*.



It is a melancholy (tho' just) Observation, made by considering Men, That, whilst we abound with *Complaints*, we are supplied but with few *Remedies*; either Passions or Prejudices lead and influence Opinions, or Authoritative Power procures a blind and obsequious Compliance; the free Use of Reason is often interrupted or perverted, and the Right which belongs to us, to judge for *our selves*, blindly surrendered to *others*, who often make us their *own Property*, whilst they pretend the Security of *ours*: Nothing is more certain, than the Right every Man has to the fair and free Use of his own Reason; and indeed the Variety of Opinions proceeds not from any Distinction in settled and common Right,
B but

but the Difference arises from the right or wrong Use of the Understanding. In the Case of Elections, every Voter has an undoubted Right, which strongly obliges him, to inquire (in the best manner he is able) into the true Character of the Person he designs to represent him: Therefore, to prevent the Abuses so frequently complain'd of, (and at this critical Juncture so much dreaded,) I shall fairly and honestly endeavour, to remind the Man of Knowledge and Probity what Duty he owes his Country, and at the same Time lay down Rules and Instructions for the Service of such, who are less knowing, whereby to judge, How much their *Happiness*, or *Misery*, depends upon their own Choice.

IT is, I think, pretty evident, That the High Court of *Parliament* is the Bulwark to the Rights and Liberties of the People; and that every Representative chosen by them, are the Persons entrusted with the Nation's Interest; and the Regard which ought to be had to a prudent and wise Choice, in a Trust of such Importance, well deserves a serious and rational Consideration: And, as this Discourse is offer'd to all the Freeholders of *Great Britain*, 'tis to be hop'd, none will insist so much upon the Ornaments of Speech, as upon Truth and Right Reason; this being not intended to amuse the Curious, so much as to instruct and assist the honest and well-meaning *Countryman*, who is generally led more by *personal Interest*, or *Bribery*, than true Regard to the Service of his Country. I shall avoid mentioning any Distinction of Parties, further, than that they regard the *Protestant Succession*, as being this Nation's Blessing and Security; If so, Whether they be call'd *Whigs*, or *Tories*, matters not, provided, they be Honest Men: For, to speak Truth, There are Good and Bad of both Denominations; but, the Force of Prejudice and Violence does so often interrupt the *Free Voice* of an honest Freeholder, that he is led to dispise a Good Man without Knowledge, and to serve a Wicked One, to oblige another (perhaps) as Bad: I shall, therefore, endeavour to offer such Methods, as may give the Voters a Light and Knowledge in their Proceedings.

NOTWITHSTANDING our late Misfortunes, 'tis a Comfort to reflect, That we live at present under a Government which allows, (and has promis'd to support us in) our just Rights and

and Liberties; and lest, at any Time, there shou'd be private Endeavours to disturb our Peace, to serve Party-Rage, or private Persons, it is the indispensable Duty of all *true Englishmen*, to maintain the Privileges convey'd from their Ancestors, through so many Generations, *inviolable*; upon which all our (*Earthly*, and in a great Measure our *Spiritual*) Happiness, Safety, and Well-being depends; nor can any Man in his Senses but acknowledge, That the only right Way to attain the *End*, is, to look well to the *Means*; and that is, by taking due Care *what Persons* we chuse for our *Representatives*; with whom we must trust our *Estates, Lives, and Liberties*.

NOW, in this Government of a Prince, by and with Parliaments, whenever the Condition and the Necessities of the State require them, however, according to it's Primitive Institutions, it was the best of all others, yet, as well in that, as in Christianity itself, there have been found out Ways of *Corruption*; and that is, when either they sit *too long*, or *too seldom*, or are too frequently *dissolv'd*: Too frequent Dissolutions being no less dangerous to the Subject, than too long Sessions. *Nevertheless*, It may be in the *Electors* Power, to avoid the Inconveniencies of *both*; and, that is, by making a *good Choice*.

WHEREAS, If the Country People will sell All that they have, for present sensual Gratifications, or corrupt Allurements, *chusing* Him that gives most *To-Day*, tho' they know *Him* to be a Person, who will sell their Religion, Liberties, and Fortunes *To-Morrow*, then frequent Dissolutions will of Necessity ruin us, and debauch our Constitution: For, the honest Country Gentleman, designing no other private Advantage, but the true Service of his King and Country, hath no Reason, nor is he able, frequently, to spend large Sums of Money, only to purchase a Place full of Labour, Charge, Trouble, and Danger, without any Profit to himself, *meerly* to serve those who put him to so unkind Expence: And when honest Gentlemen are thus discourag'd, if this extravagant Humour amongst *Electors* continue, the *Papists* and their *Faction*, or Necessitous Persons, of prostituted Consciences, will carry their Votes; for *they* can afford to buy them at

large Rates, being resolv'd to repay themselves, tho' with the Ruin of the Nation.

THIS is no vain Surmize, nor idle Speculation, but the very Truth of the Case; and the meanest Country-Man, that has Eyes in his Head, and will use them, cannot but see it: For, Did you ever know Persons buy Places, but for the Profits or Advantages that attend 'em? Therefore, Whoever you put to Charge in your *Elections*, blame him not, if he makes Money again of what he bought, and lays out his Vote in the *House*, not for *your Good* and that of the *Publick*, but such Way, as will best please the Ministers of State, that so himself may obtain a Good Place, or Preferment, or Title of Honour by the *Bargain*. I say, tho' he himself act basely in so doing, yet you cannot blame him, since you did not lend him your *Trust*, but sold it him; and what a Man hath purchased with his own Money, he thinks he may lawfully sell again.

THEREFORE, that Person who does wilfully give his Voice, for a *Knave*, or *Fool*, does his Endeavours to ruin not only his Country, and Himself, but his *Posterity*, and to be as bad or worse than the Person he chuses; and if the Majority of the *House* happen to be wiser, or honester, no Thanks are due to *him*; he did as much as he cou'd to debauch *It*; and therefore, for his Part, if none else were concern'd with him, it were no Matter, if he were forthwith made a Slave, to suffer the Effects of his own Mercenary Folly.

THE Old Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*, (who certainly was a great Statesman) did frequently deliver as a *Maxim*, or rather as a *Prophecy*, That England can hardly be ruin'd, unless it be by her own *Parliaments*; undoubtedly foreseeing, That other Oppressions, as being wrought by Violence, might, perhaps by Violence, be in Time shaken off again; whereas, when in a Parliamentary Way we are undone by a *Law*, that can never be revers'd, but by a down-right *Rebellion*: Because, the Parties advantag'd by *that Law*, will never agree to the Repealing of it; and a Rebellion is both so dangerous, and of so black a Character, that rich and considerate, or conscientious Men, will not engage therein; and therefore,

fore, no publick Mischief is so irrecoverable, as that which is grown into a Law; and Nothing, you know, can become so, but what is brought about by *Parliament*.

SUCH is the happy Frame of our Government, so prudently and so strongly have our *Ancestors* secur'd *Liberty* and *Property*, (rescued by gradual Attempts out of the Hands of encroaching Violence,) that you cannot be enslav'd but with *Chains* of your own making: For, as you are never undone, 'till you are undone by *Law*; so, you can never be undone by a *Law*, 'till you chuse the undoing *Legislators*: And, May not your Enemies add *Scorn* to their *Cruelty*, and pretend Justice for *both*, when they can urge, They had never enslav'd *you*, if you had not bow'd down to the *Yoke*?

CONSIDER, The Representatives of a Nation ought to consist of the most wise, sober, wealthy, and courageous of the People; not Men of mean Spirits, and fordid Passions, that wou'd dispose of your Interests for their own Use; or be subject to the Direction of any Great Man, to obtain some profitable Employment. Those that have *ample Estates* do, in some Manner, give *Hostages* to their Country; and such must probably become Fools themselves, before they can be made Knaves, to assist in their Country's Ruin: But, What cares the needy Senator how his Country fares, provided he thrives himself? And, What Good or Service can we expect from those, who (it may be) cannot well appear without a Protection, either in or out of Parliament? Shall we entrust our most valuable Treasure with Persons surrounded by gaping Creditors, or with prodigal Spend-thrifts? who being base in Principle and Action, will readily submit to any Measures, that may tempt 'em to repair and enlarge their ill-manag'd Fortunes, tho' it were heartily to assist in the Publick Ruin: Besides, chusing Men of broken Fortunes, is the Way to make Trade decay, and bring whole Families to Misery and Want; if *Beggars* should become *Senators*, they will not be so apt to judge what is expedient for the Nation to *spare*, but by what Means they may get enough to *spend*.

METHINKS it wou'd look like an Affront, (if Experience did not shew that it is become necessary) to tell an *Englishman*, He ought not to receive any Bribe or Gratuity from Persons, who with large Purfes and extravagant Treats, only entice you, to prostitute your *Voices* for their *Elections*; for you may be assur'd, they would never bid so high for your *Votes*, if they had not laid Schemes to recover the *Expence*.

R A T H E R, therefore, chuse a modest deserving Man, with known Integrity, than the obsequious or complimentary Person, whose more than ordinary Forwardness plainly foretells, he seeks not your Good, but his own, separate from the Publick. By all Means, Let us not play either the Fool, or Knave, to neglect or betray the common Interest of our Country, by a base *Election*; Let neither *Fear*, *Flattery*, nor *Gain*, bias us: Let us but consider what Losers we shall be, if for a few Days Mirth, the Person we chuse shou'd contribute to whole Years of Mourning, which we and our Posterity may groan under.

Y O U cannot be too cautious, how you make *Publick Choice* a Recompence for *Private Favours*: 'Tis not to please or gratify this or that Person, because he is Great or Powerful, but the Nation's Interest ought to be your main Regard. Let no Engagements put you upon dangerous and prejudicial *Elections*, as you value your Lives and Liberties, and the true Conveyance of them to your *Posterity*.

I HAVE heard it sometimes objected, That we send Gentlemen too young to Parliament: But, I think, as the Law wisely pronounces a Man at full Age, when he has attain'd Twenty One Years, we are to have more Regard for his Qualifications, than Contempt for his Youth; *some* being not only sober and honest, but also knowing and expert in the Laws and Customs of their Country, whilst it may happen an opposing Candidate may be turn'd of Fifty, without tolerable Experience or common Integrity; the *one* feeds us with growing Hopes, and the *other* fills us with Dread and Discontent: Therefore in such Cases, It is (I think)

think) the *Merit*, and not the *Age*, which ought most to be search'd into.

HENCE it evidently appears, of what *vast Importance* it is at all Times, whenever *His Majesty* pleases to issue out his *Writs* for a *Parliament*, to chuse (as much as in us lies) a *good House of Commons*; as we tender our Religion, Liberties, Estates, and Posterity; upon our well or ill chusing, depends our well or ill being: 'Tis here, as in War, or Marriages, there is no room for second Errors; one Act may ruin a Nation beyond *Retrieve*.

BEING only and sincerely concern'd for *Publick Good*, I have, with all possible Care, endeavour'd to avoid giving the least Offence to all Sorts of Persons; and shall (in like manner) without Distinction, conclude with this Remark, *That* Men of known and settled Abilities, who have gain'd *establish'd Characters* for good Conduct and Probity in the Management of their *own Affairs*, (testified through the just Experience of their *Neighbourhood*, or otherwise *sufficiently* made known,) seem the fittest and ablest *Persons* to be entrusted with the Care and Conduct of the *Publick Weal*: For, Men who have habituated themselves to Justice, and Temperance, as flowing from a willing and free Choice, are most likely to preserve the same *Virtue and Temper* at all Times, and in all Places, and if People wou'd allow themselves some Leisure for Reflection, they would easily perceive, *That (in the main)* Honest Hearts with Moderate Heads, wou'd serve the *Publick* to most *Advantage*; for a Man of *great Abilities* without *Integrity*, is but the more able to injure his *Country*, and serve *Himself*: It is much to be wish'd, *That* none may be chose, but such as are truly Wise and Good; but here we speak only our *Wishes*; if we wou'd improve our *Expectations*, It behoves us, with what Diligence and Inquiry we can, to be *well satisfied* with whom we entrust all that belongs to us as *Britons*, as well as the Happiness of our *Innocent Posterity*.

F I N I S.

